

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS:

Claims 1-17 (Cancelled)

Claim 18 (Currently Amended): A unit for handling at least one product comprising at least one ream of sheets, the product being substantially parallelepiped-shaped and being defined by two parallel, respectively top and bottom, horizontal faces, the unit comprising at least one gripping device comprising two parallel, respectively top and bottom jaws parallel to said top and bottom faces, first actuating means for moving the jaws top jaw to and from a gripping position wherein the jaws engage the product on said top and bottom faces, and second actuating means for moving the bottom jaw between a loading position wherein the bottom jaw is located beneath the top jaw and an unloading position wherein the bottom jaw is located laterally with respect to the top jaw in order to free the bottom face of the product.

Claim 19 (Currently Amended): A unit as claimed in Claim 18, wherein said top ~~and bottom jaws are~~ jaw is movable with respect to ~~each other to~~ said bottom jaw and from said gripping position in a direction perpendicular to said top and bottom faces.

Claim 20 (Previously Presented): A unit as claimed in Claim 18, wherein said bottom jaw is movable between said loading and unloading positions about an axis of rotation substantially parallel to a direction perpendicular to said top and bottom faces.

Claim 21 (Previously Presented): A unit as claimed in Claim 18, wherein said bottom jaw is movable between said loading and unloading positions in a direction substantially parallel to said top and bottom faces.

Claim 22 (Currently Amended): A unit as claimed in Claim 18, wherein said top jaw ~~has suction means for engaging said product and for retaining~~ retains the product as the bottom jaw moves in said unloading position.

Claim 23 (Previously Presented): A unit as claimed in Claim 18, wherein the product is further defined by four vertical lateral faces perpendicular to said top and bottom faces; said gripping device further comprising a stop member defined by a substantially flat surface perpendicular to said top and bottom jaws for engaging, in use, one of said lateral faces.